"GIDDYAP!" *If Buggy the koala could speak, it might give Auskar the German shepherd just that command. At Lone Pine Koala Sanctuary, "koala jockeys" like Buggy give visitors a special treat by riding Auskar. When each ride is over, Auskar gets a good rubdown.*

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World Geo-Whizzes

If you compare the two National Geographic Society flags here, you'll notice something unusual about the one at right: It's covered with more than 15,000 names! The names belong to WORLD readers who correctly decoded a secret message in the 1988 Geo-Whiz Scholarship Contest. Along with earning a place on the flag, each person earned the title of WORLD Geo-Whiz.

The contest ran from January through July 1988. Each month, participants—WORLD readers in grades three through nine—had to answer geography trivia questions. Participants saved all their answers. In July, they used the answers to unscramble this secret message:

FOR AN EXCITING ADVENTURE, TRY GEOGRAPHY.

Next, the contestants wrote the message on a postcard, along with their name, address, date of birth, grade, teacher's name, and school. The cards had to be mailed to WORLD by August 19, 1988. Entries poured in from the United States, Canada, and more than 35 other countries, including Australia, Czechoslovakia, Thailand, and Argentina.

From the entries, WORLD staff members randomly picked 100 finalists, 50 from grades 3 through 6 and 50 from grades 7 through 9. To be a finalist, entrants had to meet the contest requirements and correctly decode the secret message. On the flag, you'll see an asterisk (*) after each finalist's name. Next, working day and night, staff members and helpers read the cards, stacking up those with correct answers. At last, all who met the contest requirements and who correctly decoded the message became official Geo-Whizzes. Each received a Geo-Whiz certificate, a letter of congratulations, and a National Geographic Society world map. (If you think that you qualified but you do not see your name here, either your entry was late, your address was incomplete, staff members could not read your handwriting, your entry was not on a postcard, or you sent in more than one entry.)

All 100 finalists were eligible to enter the last part of the contest. They were asked to draw a picture map with descriptions of a trip they had already taken, or of one they hoped to take in the future. Judges reviewed the maps, looking for creativity and accuracy. Then they chose two grand-prize winners—one from each age group.

Each grand-prize winner will receive a $5,000 scholarship. Another $5,000 in National Geographic Society educational materials will go to each winner's school. You'll meet the winners—and find out about their trips—in the March 1989 issue of WORLD.

If you missed this year's contest, or if you want to try another one, your chance is coming up. The 1989 $5,000 scholarship contest will begin next month, in the January 1989 WORLD. Its title: Mystery Map Contest. To participate, you'll have to identify a portion of a map each month, then answer questions about that part of the world. Read more about the Mystery Map Contest next month. In the meantime, get ready to explore the world—again!

ART BY DAVE JONASON